

Freshman English

Course Syllabus

Mrs. Bowling

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Mission of Windham High School:

Windham High School strives to personalize the educational experience for all students through smaller learning communities in an effort to create autonomous learners.

Our classrooms integrate twenty-first century skills through the authentic application of knowledge with extensive community involvement. The foundation for our career academies' pathways is rigor, relevance, and relationships.

WHS embraces the spirit of multiculturalism in a safe environment of readiness, respect, and responsibility for all members of our diverse community.

Course Expectations:

This course for ninth graders is designed to offer the student an opportunity to enrich skills in persuasive and expository writing, speaking, vocabulary development, literary interpretation, and use of reading strategies. Through a genre-based study, students will communicate with others, explore and respond to different types of literature, and apply English language conventions. Students will read widely in different genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and short stories. Emphasis will be placed on the writing process and the writing workshop, and students will also complete a research project. Students will develop reading and testing strategies to assist in preparation for Pre-CAPT and CAPT. Students will be required to maintain a writing portfolio that will serve as the basis of self-reflection throughout the course, and to read and write independent, self-selected pieces.

Course Goals:

- A. To build character and develop academic skills, the student will:
 - Identify and practice appropriate communication skills.
 - Identify and practice appropriate time management and organizational skills.
 - Analyze and discuss the role attitude plays in success.
- B. To become better readers of the short story, the student will:
 - Identify the ingredients of plot development, including exposition, complication, climax and resolution.
 - Analyze how the author uses these elements together to create meaning, and craft.
- C. To develop and awareness of drama, the student will:
 - Participate in the guided reading of a Shakespearean play.
 - Identify details of Shakespeare's life and times that relate to his literary career and his works.
 - Identify elements of iambic pentameter, blank verse, and rhyming couplets.
- D. To study the poem as a literary type, the student will:
 - Identify the particular rhyme scheme of a poetic selection.
 - Recognize figures of speech in selections, including onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, personification and alliteration.
- E. To become familiar with the origin and history of myths, the student will:

- Identify the characters of the myths of ancient Greece and Rome.
 - Demonstrate how myths are still a part of today's society by citing examples.
- F. To study the novel as a literary type, the student will:
- Identify literary elements as they pertain to a studied novel, such as plot development, theme, conflict, symbolism, flashback, foreshadowing, etc.
 - Identify the author's statement about life that is expanded upon in the reading selection.
- G. To understand the elements and purposes of basic essays, the student will:
- Identify the author's purpose
 - Identify the author's persuasive techniques used in an essay
- H. To become familiar with the writing process, the student will:
- List and define the steps in the writing process.
 - Use each step in the writing process to write a draft, including peer conferences, revising and editing.
- I. To develop speaking and listening skills, the student will:
- Prepare and deliver an oral presentation.
 - Interpret and evaluate information through critical listening.
- J. To develop well-written compositions, letters and test question responses using correct spelling, vocabulary and grammar skills, the student will:
- Write responses to literature.
 - Write a research paper which includes an outline and MLA citations.

Grading/Policies:

To do well in our class, it is necessary for each student to participate to the very best of his or her ability. The aspects of class on which students will be assessed carry the following weight:

Classwork/Writer's Notebook	25%
Homework/Projects	25%
Quizzes	15%
Tests	20%
Preparedness/Class Participation	15%

The percentages above determine the quarterly grade. The final course grade is determined by averaging the semester and exam grades, using the semester grades as 80 percent and exam grade(s) as 20 percent.

Classwork/Writer's Notebook: We will complete assignments in class; these assignments will be evaluated as class grades. Each student will be given a **Writer's Notebook** in which he/she will record observations, "eavesdroppings," or other "seed" ideas for writing. Students will experiment with different writing conventions and methods of developing those pieces, and target specific writing strategies. Although the student may sign out his or her **Writer's Notebook** to take home, it must be in class every day for the student to use.

In the past, students have used these notebooks as a way to share personal information with me. If you choose to do so, please fold over the corner of the pages you would like me to see, and leave your notebook on my desk instead of putting it back in the file tote. Everything I read will be kept confidential unless I suspect evidence of abuse or neglect.

Homework/Projects: Students need to record assignments in the agendas provided for them by Windham High School. Homework and projects must be turned in on the day they are due for full credit.

If a student is absent, he or she has an extension that is equivalent to the number of days of the absence (for example: if a student misses two days of class, he or she will have an additional two days to make up the assignment.) It is the responsibility of the student to turn in late work, whether or not the student is asked to do so.

Writer's Workshop: Students will develop and hone their skills as writers through the use of Writer's Workshop. While there may be many times when students are required to write based on a specific topic or in response to a specific assignment, students will also be expected to write on topics that are meaningful to them. Students will work together in response groups to revise and improve their work as writers, as well as to improve their skills in peer editing and response as editors.

Independent Reading: I fully expect students to read texts outside the parameters of our class reading assignments. I encourage students to read books that they find challenging, and that they find interesting. I am happy to help any student find engaging and challenging texts, either from our in-class library, Windham High School's Library Media Center, or outside sources. At specific points through the year, we will discuss books that the students are reading independently and students will complete assignments that require them to analyze their independent reading texts.

Behavioral Expectations:

Everyone has the right to learn in a safe, friendly place. Therefore, we have one overriding rule in our classroom:

RESPECT

It is necessary, as a member of our classroom community, for us to show respect to everyone, at all times. I insist on respect for yourself, your classmates, your teachers, your environment, and for the regulations of our class and our school.

Our classroom is a safe classroom. Therefore, we use only respectful language—this means we avoid making comments about sexual orientation, race, religion, or physical, mental, or emotional challenges. Remember: your words have power. Choose them carefully.

Please be in class, ready to learn, by the time the bell rings. Please make sure to be prepared, with all necessary materials, including homework, your Writer's Notebook, your class notebook and binder and a writing tool. I will conduct random preparedness checks, so please make sure that you are consistently prepared for class.

I do have writing tools that students may borrow, on a collateral basis. In other words, I will ask you to leave some object of value with me until you return the pen or pencil. Please note that I cannot give you full points for being prepared if you do not have everything you need to learn.

Miscellaneous:

Please note that I fully reinforce Windham High School's policies, including those regarding electronic devices and headwear in school.

Electronic devices, including MP3 players and cell phones, are not to be used between 7:30 AM and 2:00 PM at Windham High School since they are a distraction to the educational process. If you have these devices, they must be put away, either locked in your locker, or kept in your backpack or your pocket. If I see these devices, I will have to confiscate them from you. If this becomes a recurrent problem, the devices will be turned over to the Main Office and your parent or guardian will need to retrieve it.

Dress Code: The **dress code** in our classroom must conform to the expectations set forth by Windham High School. Please keep your clothing appropriate, dressing for school as you would for a job. High

school is your job; you should be comfortable, and dressed in a way that is not distracting to your classmates or to other students.

Hats or any other kind of head covering (including bandanas or hoods) cannot be worn in the school between the hours of 7:30 AM and 2:30 PM.

Academic Integrity is of the utmost importance in school. All work handed in must be original work—not copied from the Internet, a book, a classmate, or any other source. There are ways of quoting other people’s work to create your own arguments, but please keep in mind that *plagiarism* will not be tolerated in the classroom, and will have serious consequences, the least of which will be loss of credit for the assignment, as well as notification of our school administration, your other team teachers, and your parent(s) or guardian(s).

Classroom Materials: I will provide you with a Writer’s Notebook, a Writing Portfolio for writing-in-process and finished pieces, and a classroom portfolio that will be used to hand back your work. ***Please keep track of these items and make sure not to lose them; you will need to replace the items if they are lost, but the work contained within them is often irreplaceable.***

Please bring the following supplies for English class:

- 3-ring binder (at least 1” thick) to hold handouts, quizzes for studying, vocabulary, etc;
- a set of five (5) tab dividers;
- a one-subject notebook for classroom notes;
- a writing tool (pencil or pen) for every class;
- a highlighter.

If obtaining these items is a financial hardship to you, please see me privately.

Extra Help:

My students’ success is of the utmost importance to me. I encourage students to meet with me whenever they need help! I am available for assistance during periods A and B during first semester, and most days after school. Please set up an appointment to see me whenever you feel it is necessary!

I look forward to a wonderful year of learning together. Please make sure that this syllabus is kept in the front of your three-ring binder.

Your first English homework assignment is to bring this syllabus home and review it with a parent or guardian. You and your parent or guardian must sign in the appropriate places on the following page; please keep the top portion of that page at home, and return the bottom portion to class no later than Tuesday, September 7th.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We all know how important parental involvement is in helping children achieve success in school. Because I know that you want your child to have a wonderful year in English, I invite you to review the class syllabus and class rules with him or her.

Home communication is a key part of my educational philosophy, and I welcome your questions about what is happening in class in general, and your child's progress. Please remember that parents have access to Windham's online gradebook, which allows you to check your child's grades and upcoming assignments on the Internet.

Please provide below the most convenient contact information so that I may contact you with concerns, or with good news. If there is anything specific you would like me to know about your child, please feel free to indicate that below. I look forward to working with your child and you this year, and I encourage you to contact me at any time, either by phone at (860) 465-2460 or by e-mail at dbowling@windham.k12.ct.us.

Thank you!
Mrs. Dara Bowling

Keep the portion above this line.

Return the portion below this line.

Student: I have read and understand the class syllabus, including behavior expectations, for Freshman English.

Name (print) _____

Signature_____ Date _____

Parent: I have reviewed with my child the classroom procedures and class syllabus.

Signature _____ Date _____

Phone (day) _____ Phone (evening) _____

E-mail Address _____

Preferred Method of Contact _____